
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

NEWS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

NATIONAL
OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION

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NOAA04-R803
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Feb. 17, 2004

NOAA SELECTS PIER FOR NEW FISHERIES VESSEL

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has selected the city of Kodiak's Pier 2 as the homeport site for NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson*, a state-of-the-art fisheries survey vessel that is expected to become operational in early 2005. Pier 2 was selected primarily because of its close proximity to the downtown area and facility costs.

"Homeporting the *Oscar Dyson* in Kodiak could provide 19 jobs in the area – up to 17 on the ship and two on shore," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "NOAA intends to staff the ship with local civilian mariners, to the extent possible, which will have a positive effect on the Kodiak economy." NOAA representatives will be in Kodiak on March 31, 2004, to host a job fair, in cooperation with the Jobs Center, to recruit potential applicants.

The 208-ft. *Oscar Dyson*, named for the late Alaska industry leader, is presently under construction at VT Halter Marine Inc. in Moss Point, Miss. It was christened by Oscar Dyson's widow, Peggy Dyson-Malson, and launched on Oct. 17, 2003. The ship is scheduled for delivery to NOAA later this summer, and will undergo extensive sea trials and calibration with NOAA Ship *Miller Freeman* before going into service. *Oscar Dyson* will work primarily in support of NOAA Fisheries and the Alaska Fisheries Science Center's stock assessment surveys in the Bering Sea and adjacent waters. The ship is expected to spend approximately 275 days per year underway and operating.

The NOAA fleet of research and survey ships and aircraft is operated, managed and maintained by NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations. NMAO includes commissioned officers of the NOAA Corps and civilians. The NOAA Corps is the nation's seventh and smallest uniformed service. As part of NOAA, it is under the U.S. Department of Commerce. *Oscar Dyson* will be under the command of Commander Frank Wood, NOAA Corps.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

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On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NMAO: <http://www.nmao.noaa.gov>